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SUBJECT:PROTECTION OF SOVIET DIPLOMATS IN US

1. MARCH 17 DEPARTMENT COUNSELOR SONNENFELDT GAVE SOVIET EMBASSY CHARGE VORONTSOV NOTE IN RESPONSE TO RECENT SOVIET EMBASSY PROTESTS ABOUT HARASSMENT AND DEMONSTRATIONS AGAINST SOVIET PERSONNEL IN US, PRIMARILY NEW YORK. SONNENFELDT SAID DEPARTMENT WAS CONCERNED ABOUT RECENT INCIDENTS, PARTICULARLY RIVERDALE SHOOTING AND AEROFLOT BOMBING. HE SAID DEPARTMENT ALSO CONSIDERS EXTREMELY UNFORTUNATE THE RECENT PRESS ARTICLES ALLEGEDLY IDENTIFYING SOVIET DIPLOMATS AS INTELLIGENCE AGENTS.

2. SONNENFELDT NOTED THAT DEPARTMENT AND USG WERE DOING EVERYTHING POSSIBLE WITHIN FRAMEWORK OF US LAWS, BUT DO NOT ENJOY OPTION OF SIMPLY SUPRESSING THE ORGANIZATIONS WHICH ARE DEMONSTRATING AND RELEASING THE PRESS STORIES IDENTIFYING SOVIET OFFICIALS AS INTELLIGENCE AGENTS. HE SAID POLICE
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PROTECTION HAD BEEN INCREASED IN NEW YORK, AND DEPARTMENT

PROVIDED TEMPORARY SPECIAL PROTECTION FOR SOME OF THE SOVIET AND UKRAINIAN MISSION OFFICERS ALLEGED IN THE PRESS TO BE INTELLIGENCE OFFICERS. SONNENFELDT COMMENTED THAT DEPARTMENT HAD ALSO TAKEN UNPRECEDENTED STEP OF APPEALING DIRECTLY TO JEWISH DEFENSE LEAGUE AND FREE POLAND MOVEMENT. DEPARTMENT AND OTHER RESPONSIBLE AGENCIES ARE ACTIVELY EXAMINING LEGAL TECHNICALITIES OF SOME OF THE RELEVANT LAWS LOOKING FOR WAYS TO USE PRESENT LAW MORE EFFECTIVELY TO DEAL WITH SITUATION AT HAND, AND, SONNENFELDT NOTED, SENIOR DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS HAD WRITTEN AND PHONED SENIOR OFFICIALS IN JUSTICE AND NEW YORK CITY ABOUT GENERAL PROBLEM OF PROTECTING SOVIET PERSONNEL.

4. VORONTSOV EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR MEASURES TAKEN, BUT NOTED THAT "NO ONE HAD BEEN PUNISHED" FOR ACTS AGAINST SOVIET DIPLOMATS. HE EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT WHAT HE DESCRIBED AS WORSENING ATMOSPHERE FOR SOVIETS IN NEW YORK CITY, AND REPORTED THAT SOVIETS HAD JUST RECEIVED THREAT THAT SOVIET TEENAGE GIRL WOULD BE KIDNAPPED AND RAPED IN RETALIATION FOR MARINA TIEMKINA CASE.

5. SONNENFELDT SAID DEPARTMENT UNDERSTANDS AND SHARES SOVIETS' DISMAY ABOUT PROTECTION AND SECURITY PROBLEM IN NEW YORK, AND ASSURED VORONTSOV THAT THE US GOVERNMENT WILL CONTINUE TO ENFORCE THE LAW TO THE LIMIT AND MEET ITS OBLIGATIONS TO PROTECT SOVIET PERSONNEL.

6. SONNENFELDT SAID DEPARTMENT WAS TROUBLED BY VARIOUS SOVIET THREATS OF RETALIATION AGAINST US PERSONNEL IN USSR. HE SUGGESTED THAT SOVIET OFFICIALS' THREATS THAT SOVIET AUTHORITIES MIGHT MOUNT RETALIATORY ACTION AGAINST AMERICANS INDICATED SOVIET GOVERNMENT CONSIDERED ACTIONS AGAINST SOVIETS IN US ARE INITIATED BY AMERICAN AUTHORITIES, AND THAT IS CERTAINLY NOT THE CASE. VORONTSOV SAID DEPARTMENT MISUNDERSTOOD SOVIET COMMENTS, WHICH MEANT ONLY THAT PUBLICATION IN USSR OF OUTRAGES AGAINST SOVIET PERSONNEL IN US MIGHT PROMPT "DRUNKS AND HOOLIGANS" IN USSR TO ATTEMPT SIMILAR ACTS AGAINST AMERICANS. SONNENFELDT SAID NEITHER SIDE WOULD BENEFIT FROM CHAIN OF ACTIONS AND COUNTERACTIONS. VORONTSOV AGREED, AND SAID CONFIDENTIAL

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SOVIET AUTHORITIES WOULD CONTINUE TO PROVIDE PROTECTION TO AMERICANS NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENED. VORONTSOV SUGGESTED THAT SOVIET AUTHORITIES WITH THEIR "REVOLUTIONARY JUSTICE" WOULD PROVE MORE EFFECTIVE IN MEETING SECURITY THREAT THAN AMERICAN AUTHORITIES. KISSINGER

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